

**VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
(Vet PAC)  
MEETING MINUTES  
March 25, 2004  
NIH Bethesda Campus, Building 31, Conference Room 3C05**

**Members Present**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>
CDR	Shanna Nesby-O'dell	CDC Representative
CDR	Don Gardner	NIH Representative
CDR	Yvette Davis	Vice Chair, Member at large
CDR	Estella Jones	Chair, FDA Representative
CDR	Terri Clark	NIH, Past Chair, ex officio member
Dr.	Mark Abdy	Civil Service Representative
LCDR	Kim Taylor	Member at large
LCDR	Patty Klein	Junior Officer Representative
LCDR	Regina Tan	Executive Secretary, USDA, FSIS

**Members Absent**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>
CAPT	Bill Stokes	CPO, NIH, non-voting Ex Officio member, <i>unable to attend due to family emergency</i>
CDR	David Ashford	Geographic Location
LCDR	Ed Wozniak	Geographic Location

**Guests Present**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Agency</b>
CAPT	Hugh Mainzer	CDC
CAPT	John Bartholomew	NIH
CAPT	Shelly Hoogstraten	NIH
CDR	Johnny Braddy	CFSAN, FDA
CDR	Martin Kriete	NIH
CDR	Meta Timmons	PSC
LCDR	Marta Guerra	CDC
LCDR	Nelva Bryant-Gibbs	CFSAN, FDA
LCDR	Princess Campbell	EPA
LCDR	Sanyvette Williams	EPA
LCDR	Anne Emshoff	USDA, FSIS
LT	Kris Bisgard	CDC
LT	Kis Robertson	USDA, FSIS

CDR Estella Jones called the meeting to order at 1303 hours and introduced members and guests.

## **AGENDA ITEMS**

### **Agency Updates**

1. NIH – CDR Clark: NIH employs mostly laboratory animal veterinarians, although some pathology, research based, and non-traditional veterinarians are also hired. Both Dr. Michael Gottesman and RADM Wyatt are supportive of CC officers, as is the Agency as a whole. The Agency is also exploring recruitment mechanisms (e.g. graduate programs, residency programs, and loan repayment options with a \$12,000/year and \$40,000 total payment cap). Supervisors may need to be educated about COERs, awards, etc.
  - a. Center for Scientific Review – CDR Davis: The Center for Scientific Review is looking with veterinarians with both a clinical background and subject expertise. It currently has 2 veterinarians and additional vacancies are expected.
  - b. Animal Resources – CDR Kriete: Animal Resources will actively recruit CC Veterinarians, although they must compete with contractors for clinical lab animal veterinary slots.
2. FDA – CDR Jones: FDA has 5 centers: Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research (CBER), Center for Devices and Radiological Health (CDRH), Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (CDER), Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN), Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM), and National Center for Toxicological Research (NCTR). Unrealized potential for veterinarians at FDA exists in the recently-passed Animal Drug User Fee Act (AFDUCA) and clinical drug trials. FDA advertises positions from the entry (O3) to the director (O6) level.
  - a. There was introduced by CDR Gardner some discussion on issues recruiting higher-level veterinarians who may perceive higher benefits in civil service as opposed to uniformed service positions. The issue of retirement and subsequent salary caps and agency changes was discussed. CDR Nesby may have in her files an email containing documentation addressing this issue.
3. CDC – CDR Nesby: Of the 81 veterinarians currently employed at CDC, 28 (35%) are CC veterinarians. Of these 28, 17 are epidemiologists. Few employment opportunities exist for junior veterinarians that do not enter CDC through internal training programs. Retirement benefits are perceived as a good recruitment tool.
4. EPA – LCDR Campbell: EPA now retains 3 veterinarians and a 2:1 civil service:CC ratio at headquarters. EPA understands that officers must serve both CC and EPA missions, and additionally provides support for officers to attend COA meetings. Since the Food Quality Protection Act mandated that EPA assess (and reassess) all pesticide tolerances and exemptions by 2006, EPA is very interested in hiring personnel to assist with the risk and hazard assessments. Personnel additionally must craft directives, liaise with OGC, and write well for both scientific and lay audiences. EPA feels that direct hire of CC is easier than the civilian-equivalent process. However, LCDR does note that there is a division ceiling at GS 14. Veterinarians would need an advanced degree to qualify. Accreditation with the American College of Veterinary Preventive Medicine should be appropriate qualification for applicants.
5. USDA – LCDR Tan: USDA currently retains 19 CC officers, 6 of which are

veterinarians. Veterinarians are spread across several program areas, including human resources, policy, emergency preparedness, public health, and field operations. Interested personnel should contact CAPT Cindy Pond. CDR Jones adds that CAPT Pond is working on a Memorandum of Understanding with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS).

### **CCRF Deployments**

There was introduced by CDR Jones some discussion of officer's opinions of new CCRF deployment requirements. Although the issue of possible CCRF deployment does not seem to be problematic for officers, supervisors seem hesitant to release officers employed in scientific specialty areas. The question of deployments affecting hiring at CDC was discussed at the CDC All Hands meeting. No specific answer was given, although leadership did reinforce that the CC will move forward with the Transformation as one unified Department for long-term benefit.

CDR Mainzer introduced the Futures Initiative and CDC reorganization, to be released 4/19/2004. The Initiative represents a new business model of management. CC involvement in this Initiative is yet unclear. CDR Mainzer also mentioned that the Atlanta COA and civil service feel that CCRF deployments would make it difficult for officers to hold positions of authority, so the CDC director retains the right to overrule participation.

CDR Nesby indicated that CDC has had discussions concerning CCRF and CDC priority for national needs. CDC worries that officer's talents will not be used to their fullest extent if they are deployed through CCRF. CDR Clark here noted that officers should be listed on CCRF or Agency rosters, with Agency rosters taking overriding CCRF rosters.

Some concern was noted that veterinarians who select "Clinical Veterinarian" as their Primary Deployment Role will be restricted in the number of deployments for which they are eligible. Further concern was voiced that Deployment Roles may not accurately capture officer's multifaceted talents.

### **Daily uniform wear**

CDC: strongly encouraged

USDA: mandated

NIH: strongly encouraged

FDA: not mandated

### **Committee reports**

1. The Awards Committee – LCDR Taylor: The Awards Committee has had 2 teleconference meetings to date. The nomination period for the Veterinarian of the Year Award has been extended from 3/31/2004 to 4/15/2004 to stimulate nominations. The subcommittee appointed to oversee the review of nominations includes: CAPT Angulo, LCDR Sanyvette Williams, and LCDR Allison Williams. Three senior veterinarians will review the nominations and forward their selection to LCDR Taylor by 4/23/04. LCDR Crystal Thomas is responsible for obtaining the award plaque.

The Awards Committee is also discussing the development of an Awards Guidance Document to guide officers and their supervisors through the awards process. The subcommittee is in the early phases of development and has obtained relevant award

guidance documents from CDC and FDA. The Subcommittee requests that any other relevant documents be forwarded to the Chair, LCDR Taylor.

2. The All Hands Committee – LCDR Taylor: The All Hands Meeting has been scheduled for 6/28/2004 from 12:30 – 15:30. The tentative agenda for this meeting is as follows: general announcements and category updates from CAPT Stokes and Veterinarian of the Year Announcement and Special Assignment Awards by CDR Jones. Additionally, CDR Clara Witt has been asked to speak on her CCRF deployments for Avian Influenza, and SARS. Additional speakers and the final agenda will be presented at the next Vet PAC meeting. CAPT Randy Elkins has graciously volunteered again to fund this event this year.
  - a. Discussion: Many categories use COA to highlight awards. CDR Mainzer offers the use of COA for the Veterinary Category to do the same and increase the winner's and category's visibility to other CC officers. CDR Clark mentioned last year's discussions on this topic: 1) more Veterinary officers attend All Hands than COA, 2) many officers struggle with funding to attend COA, and 3) a COA charges a fee for award presentations.
3. The Recruitment Committee – Dr. Abdy: This Committee has planned and drafted a letter of advertisement to SAVMA's InterVet Journal. The Committee has further contacted both the journal's editor and advisor to place an advertisement on the journal's website.
  - a. LT Robertson noted that the Committee had discussed downsizing goals set in the 12/2003 VetPAC Retreat.
  - b. CDR Braddy noted that Dr. Maury Potter would like to advertise a laboratory animal detail to CDC's monkey pox lab. Interested persons (including Costep participants) should contact CDR Braddy.
4. Mentorship Committee – CDR Gardner: The Mentorship Committee has had one teleconference, in which they discussed a divergence from the traditional mentorship structure. This new form of mentorship would expand beyond the mechanics of maneuvering through a CC career and take a more global perspective encompassing 1) career tracks and 2) supportive training necessary to pursue chosen career tracks.
  - a. Differing levels of officers would need differing levels of mentorship. New officers would need guidance through category bench marks, promotion precepts, and career tracks that sustain a longer CC career. Mid-career officers would need guidance to help them take advantage of advanced training opportunities.
  - b. This system should support veterinarians and help them to attain leadership positions.
  - c. Possible leadership training opportunities identified: Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Development Center, USDA Graduate College, USHUS degree granting.
5. CCRF Committee – LCDR Klein: The CCRF Committee has had 1 conference call. During this time, the Committee has proposed developing a "recipe" to help officers qualify for CCRF. They anticipate that this "recipe" will be completed by June, 2004.

The CCRF Committee has also begun a survey of the Veterinary Category to describe major obstacles to officers becoming CCRF qualified. LCDR Klein presented the following preliminary results.

- a. Of the 30% of officers who have responded to the survey
    - i. BLS: 25% have access to BLS
    - ii. CCRF modules: Less than 50% have completed CCRF modules
    - iii. CCRF modules: 100% have online access to modules at work but do not have time during the workday to complete them
    - iv. Role training: 50% would be able to attend
    - v. Professional currency: 25% maintain professional currency, 75% don't have time
    - vi. Public Health Veterinarian as a deployment role: Most would consider this role if it was available to them
    - vii. Current immunizations: not an issue for most
    - viii. Physical Fitness Testing: most training both during and after work; most have taken the test
    - ix. Supervisor support: 50% have support from their supervisor
    - x. Inadequate information: 25% - 30% do not have adequate information on the CCRF training process
    - xi. Time for training: 70% do not have time for training
  - b. CDR Jones updated the PAC on RADM Babb's statistics pertaining to officers putting forth promotion packages that met deployment standards
    - i. 1450 of 6000 officers met deployment standards
    - ii. 923 lacked online training modules
    - iii. 413 did not have current vaccinations
    - iv. 163 did not have a physical exam within the last 5 years
    - v. 11 of the 500 highest ranking officers met standards
    - vi. 156 of the 2000 highest ranking officers met standards
  - c. CDR Jones further urges officers to check their deployment status on the CCRF website (<http://oep.osophs.dhhs.gov/ccrf/>)
  - d. LCDR Klein further noted that veterinarians in the "Clinical Veterinarian" deployment role may not have many opportunities to deploy, a reason to consider re-categorizing deployment roles.
6. Holiday Ball Committee – CDR Clark: The Holiday Ball will take place on Saturday, December 4, 2004. The event will be held in the Ft. Myers Officers' Club, and entertainment will be provided by the PHS Ensemble. CDR Clark has requested that Deputy Surgeon General, RADM Moritsugu, will be the guest speaker.

7. Veterinary Category-Day Planning Committee Updates – CDR Braddy: CDR Braddy reported that most of the COA Meeting components were in place for May 18, 2004. This year's theme will be "Veterinary Medicine's Crucial Role in Public Health and Biodefense." Twelve presenters and 2 contributing papers have been scheduled. The Committee is also discussing plans for having a social gathering from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm the evening of May 18th. The Provisional Agenda is provided for information:
  - a. CAPT William Stokes, CPO Veterinary Category - Welcoming and Opening Remarks
  - b. CAPT Michael Keiffer, Chief, Commissioned Corps Personnel – Operation Artic Care a Joint Uniform Service Operation
  - c. RADM Linda Tollefson, Deputy Director, CVM - From There to Here – Alternative Careers for Veterinarians in Public Health
  - d. RADM Robert Whitney, DVM - Public Health/Industry Collaboration in Biosecurity and Judicious Use of Antibiotics on Dairy Farms
  - e. Dr. Tracy Lynn, Alaska Department of Health - Environmental Health Monitoring in Alaska
  - f. Dr. Louisa Castrodale, State Public Health Veterinarian, Alaska DPH – Guest Speaker
  - g. CDR Johnny E. Braddy, DVM, MPH - Agroterrorism Awareness: Safeguarding American Agriculture
  - h. LCDR Patrice N. Klein, MS, VMD, DACPV, DACVPM - Overview of VMATs: Roles in Disaster Response
  - i. CDR Hugh Mainzer, MS, DVM, DACVPM - One World, One Medicine: Integrating Veterinary Science with Public Health Practice
  - j. CDR Estella Z. Jones-Miller, DVM - The Emerging Role of the PHS CC Officer in Federal Regulatory Medicine
  - k. CDR Terri R. Clark, DVM, DACLAM - ACUC Regulatory Oversight at NIH
  - l. CDR Yvette M. Davis, VMD, MPH - Contributing to the Mission of the USPHS as a Health Scientist Administrator
  - m. LCDR Anne Emshoff – Animal Carcass Disposal: Emergency Mass Slaughter Considerations
  - n. LCDR Regina Tan – Childhood Dog-Bite Surveillance System Recommendations for Three Counties, Georgia, 2003
  - o. CDR Martin F. Kriete, DVM, DACLAM - Closing Remarks

#### **Proposed Additions to By-Laws – CDR Davis**

Copies of the "By-laws for the Veterinary Professional Advisory Committee of the United States Public Health Service" were distributed to meeting attendees. CDR Davis and CDR Jones request that officers return comments to CDR Davis in 2 weeks.

#### **New Business – CDR Jones**

1. Welcome back to CDR Kriete
2. ACLAM Forum may conflict with the next PAC meeting.
3. Website updates are needed from subcommittees. Please submit to CDR Jones.

**Announcements/Concerns Around the Room - None**

**Next Meeting**

The meeting was adjourned at 1525. Minutes were prepared by LCDR Regina Tan and approved electronically by Vet PAC members.